

Reply to Office Action dated January 4, 2006

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-10 and 13-27 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 3, 13, 20 and 23 are amended and claims 11-12 and 28-32 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the Office Action's indication that claims 28-32 contain allowable subject matter. By this Amendment, independent claims 1, 3, 11, 13, 20 and 23 are amended to include allowable features of dependent claims 28-32, respectively. Thus, independent claims 1, 3, 11, 13, 20 and 23 define patentable subject matter. Each of the dependent claims depends from one of the independent claims and therefore defines patentable subject matter at least for this reason. In addition, the dependent claims recite features that further and independently distinguish over the applied references.

The Office Action rejects claims 11 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. §101 and 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. By this Amendment, claims 11-12 are canceled. Thus, the rejection of these claims is moot.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and prompt allowance of claims 1, 3-10 and 13-27 are earnestly solicited. If the Examiner believes that any additional changes would place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Serial No. **09/631,941**

Docket No. **K-0200**

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To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this, concurrent and future replies, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 16-0607 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,
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